

Roots

March 25, 2015

Wednesday

Read Psalm 95

Let us sing to the Lord!

What does your song say? Does it rejoice at God's goodness? Or, does it rise up like the Israelites of old, who for forty years complained and strayed? Thinking about this question, we all probably feel a little guilty. But, especially in the face of this guilt our rejoicing and songs should be all the louder, because the same hands that hold the depths of the earth also hold deep nail holes, and the same voice that created the seas calmed them from a fishing boat. This same voice, the voice of our God has come to us in Jesus, and he leads us to abundant pastures and abundant life. Knowing this we go into his presence with thanksgiving in our hearts and songs of praise on our lips, that we may be reminded of his forgiveness and the salvation he has won for us.

Thursday

Read John 10: 27-30

What powerful words! No one and nothing can snatch Jesus' sheep from his grasp. Not even death can keep Jesus' sheep from him, for he is the Lord of all, even death. When life presses in hard around us, when our bones break and our homes crumble, when our hearts falter and our journeys fail, hear Jesus' voice! "No one will snatch my sheep from my hand for I and the Father are one, and He is greater than all!" You are Jesus' little lamb, and nothing can change that!

Friday

Read Luke 15: 1-7

Jesus shows us where his

concern lies. It is not with those who are righteous, it is with those who need his salvation. Where is your concern? It is easy to allow the concerns of the world and our understanding of Christianity to cloud our judgment on this question. Sometimes we get so wrapped up in doing things right and being the perfect Christians that we forget that it is only under the forgiveness of Jesus that we are perfect Christians. We are easily blinded by the status quo or "keeping up with the Christians" and fall into the folly of the Pharisees. We are not meant for self-righteousness, we are meant for justice and righteousness outside ourselves. So, from Jesus we learn to look to him for our righteousness and from there to his lost sheep that they too might know Jesus' righteousness as their own.

Saturday

Read John 11: 21-27

What do you believe about Jesus? Martha shows a great faith in the Christ. She knows that if only Jesus had been present at Lazarus' death, there would have been no death, and she knows (or perhaps is resigned to the fact) that her brother will rise again on the resurrection. That is pretty amazing! But, Jesus pushes her to even greater faith. "I am the resurrection!" he declares. How often do you think about him being the resurrection? I mean

really *BEING* the resurrection. His is the only name by which we will be saved, he is the only Lord of Life and Death that will take our hands and walk us through this life, through death and into the life that will never end! He is the one to whom our faith looks and to whom our belief clings. He is our life. He is our resurrection.

Sunday

Come to Church to receive Christ's blessings and strength.

Monday

Read John 14: 18-24

What does it mean to keep the commandments and Jesus' word? Does it mean to hold them in high regard? Does it mean to guard them against falsehood? Does it mean to refrain from sharing them with others? What does it mean to keep Jesus' commandments and word? Yes, we are to hold them in high regard, but if that is all we do, we fall short in understanding Jesus' words here. Are we to guard them against falsehood? Yes, in our own lives lest the falsehood become our new commandment, but does God's word need our defense against others? No. So that cannot be the answer either. Are we to refrain from sharing Jesus word with others? Absolutely not!

What does it mean, then, to keep these words? Quite simply, keeping the commandments means loving Jesus. Loving Jesus means seeking everything from his hand. From his nail scarred hands we look for

forgiveness and life. Loving Jesus is nothing less than living in his forgiveness gratefully and trusting that he is enough for you. This means that we keep his commandments by love. We love him for his gifts to us and we love others by sharing our life, that is Jesus, with them. That is keeping the commandments.

Tuesday

Read 2 Timothy 1: 8-14

Do not be ashamed! Let Paul do the work this time. Meditate on his words here in his letter to Timothy. Think about how they form your life. Do not be ashamed of the Holy calling that God has given you in Christ Jesus, live it! Do not tarnish the good that the Holy Spirit works in you by hiding it in shame, let it shine out that by your life you might proclaim the testimony of Jesus, who has abolished death and given you life.

Pastor Carl Jh

